THE ETERNALS

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WHEN GODS WALK THE EARTH!

THE ETERNALS™

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UNLEASHED THIS ISSUE!

UNI-MIND!

THE MOST FANTASTIC LIFE FORM OF ALL!

PLUS: AJAX THE ETERNAL BATTLES A DEMON FROM THE PAST!

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Strange events have exposed a startling fact, kept alive through the centuries only by myth and superstition—man is not alone on the evolutionary chain!! He has shared the planet with two species unknown to him! Now, in a sudden burst of violence, the Deviants have risen from their domain beneath the sea to challenge all humanity!! But mankind has unexpected allies—

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE ETERNALS!™

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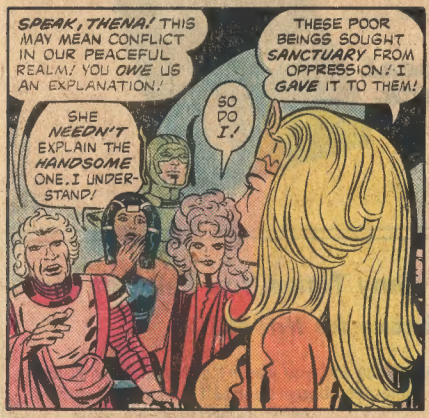
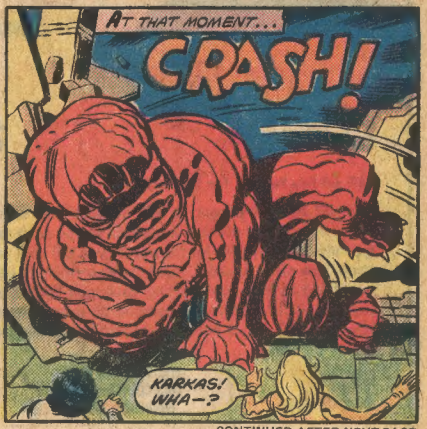
THE NEW ARRIVALS TO OLYMPIA MATERIALIZE IN THE MANNER COMMON TO THE ABILITIES OF ALL ETERNALS. IT IS A BRILLIANT FLASH OF LIGHT, CONTAINING WITHIN ITS GLOWING CENTER THE ASSEMBLING ATOMS OF THE TRAVELLERS...

OUR INSTINCTS DO *NOT* LIE! WE ARE PRIVY TO GUESTS OF AN *UNPRECEDENTED* NATURE!

WHY MINCE WORDS!? CALL THEM WHAT THEY *ARE*!!





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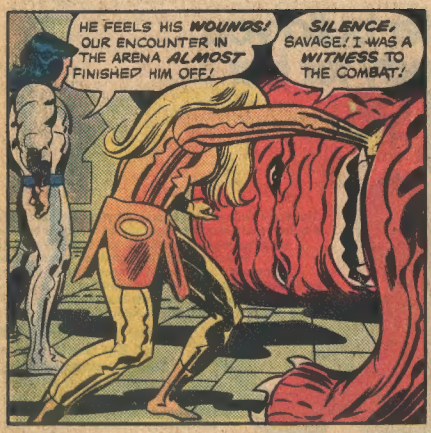
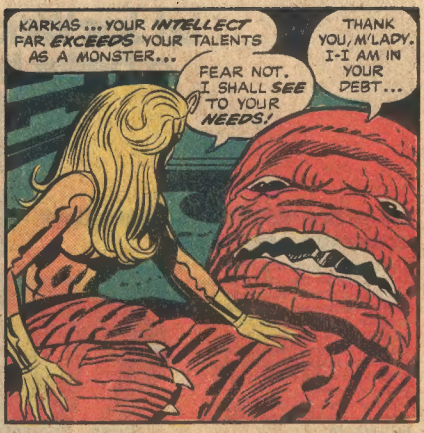
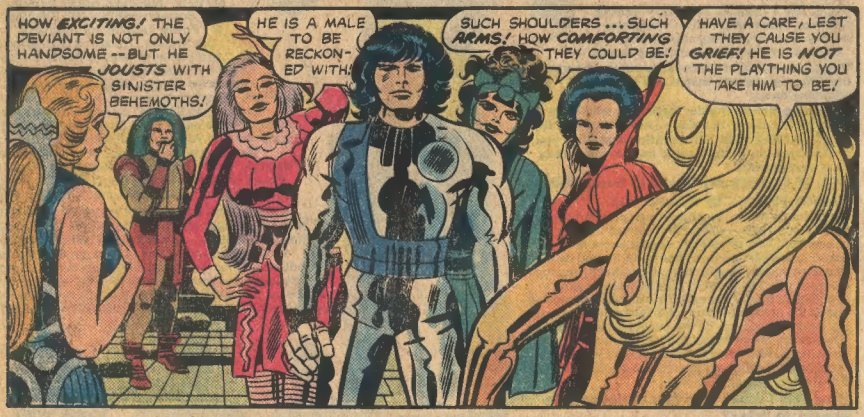
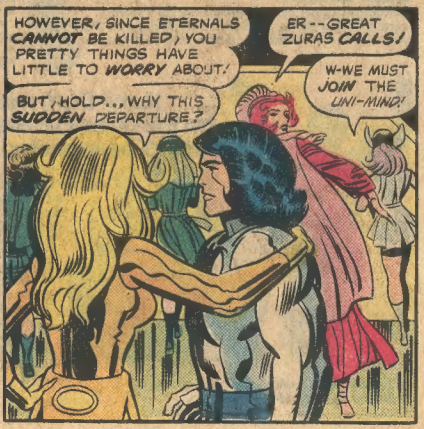
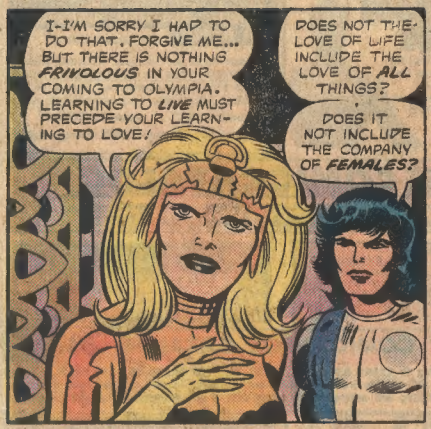

HE FEELS HIS WOUNDS! OUR ENCOUNTER IN THE ARENA ALMOST FINISHED HIM OFF!
SILENCE, SAVAGE! I WAS A WITNESS TO THE COMBAT!

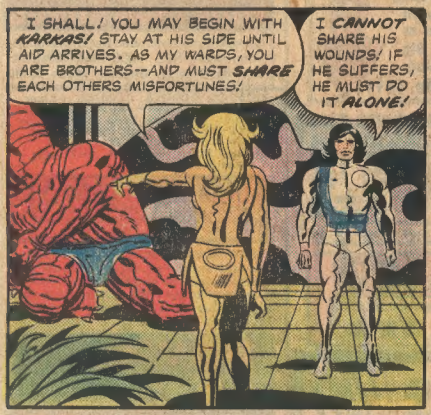

KARKAS ... YOUR INTELLECT FAR EXCEEDS YOUR TALENTS AS A MONSTER...
FEAR NOT. I SHALL SEE TO YOUR NEEDS!
THANK YOU, M'LADY. I-I AM IN YOUR DEBT...

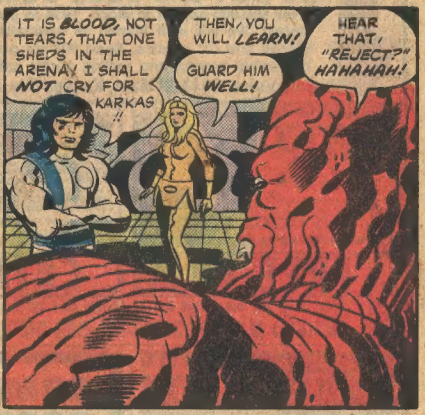

HOW EXCITING! THE DEVIANT IS NOT ONLY HANDSOME--BUT HE JOUSTS WITH SINISTER BEHEMOTHS!
HE IS A MALE TO BE RECKONED WITH!
SUCH SHOULDERS ... SUCH ARMS! HOW COMFORTING THEY COULD BE!
HAVE A CARE, LEST THEY CAUSE YOU GRIEF! HE IS NOT THE PLAYTHING YOU TAKE HIM TO BE!

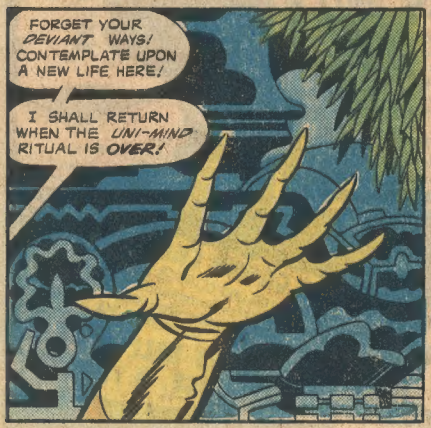
I MAKE NO PRETENSE OF GENTILITY. MY LIFE HAS BEEN ONE OF KILLING, TO SURVIVE COMBAT IN THE ARENA!
AND YOU DO IT SO WELL --DON'T YOU, --SWEET PRINCE--!

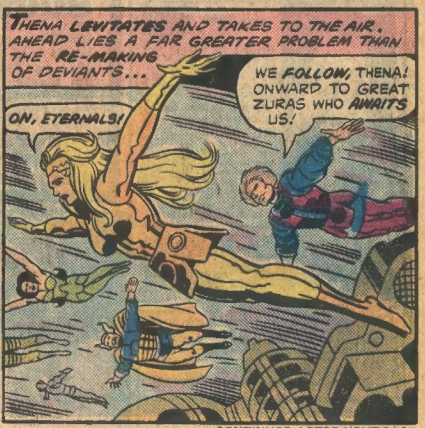

HOWEVER, SINCE ETERNALS CANNOT BE KILLED, YOU PRETTY THINGS HAVE LITTLE TO WORRY ABOUT!
BUT, HOLD... WHY THIS SUDDEN DEPARTURE?
ER--GREAT ZURAS CALLS!
W-WE MUST JOIN THE UNI-MIND!











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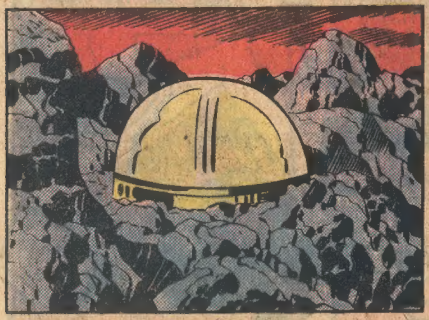
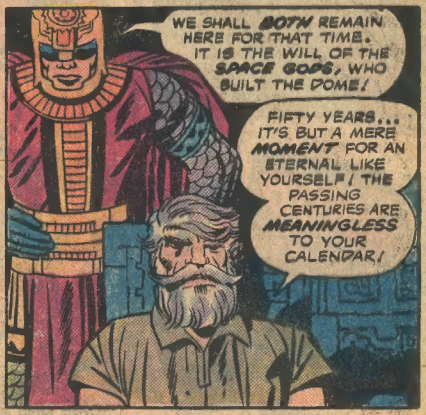
MEANTIME, KARKAS AND THE REJECT HAVE BEEN LEFT TO THEMSELVES... WITH THE DARK THOUGHTS OF THEIR PAST... AND THE DISTURBING QUESTION OF THEIR FUTURE...
HAHAHAHAH! SMILE, SWEET PRINCE! DESTINY PLAYS THE CLOWN WITH BOTH OF US! HERE, I MAY YET BECOME A PHILOSOPHER OF NOTE!--AND YOU, MASTER KILLER, MAY INHERIT THE BALCONIES AND ROSE GARDENS OF FAIR YOUNG MAIDENS!!
EASE YOUR BATTLE STANCE! THE SHADOWS HIDE NOTHING BUT COOL BREEZES... THERE ARE NO ENEMIES --IN PARADISE!
FOOL! IT'S SMALL WONDER THAT YOU FALL PREY TO SMALLER OPPONENTS!
PARADISE IS JUST ANOTHER PLACE! --AND EACH PLACE HAS CORNERS FOR THE WARY EYE TO SCOUR AND SEEK OUT--TO CERTIFY THE STATE OF THEIR IMPOTENCE!

MEANWHILE, ACROSS THE WORLD, UPON THE TOPMOST HEIGHTS OF THE ANDES MOUNTAINS, A HUGE DOME-LIKE STRUCTURE HAS APPEARED ON THE SITE OF DESOLATE RUINS, ONCE INHABITED BY THE ANCIENT INCAS...



WITHIN THE DOME ARE LOCKED THE SECRETS OF THE PAST AND THE TERRIFYING GHOSTS OF THE FUTURE... AND A TIRED OLD MAN, ADRIFT IN A TIMELESS VACUUM...



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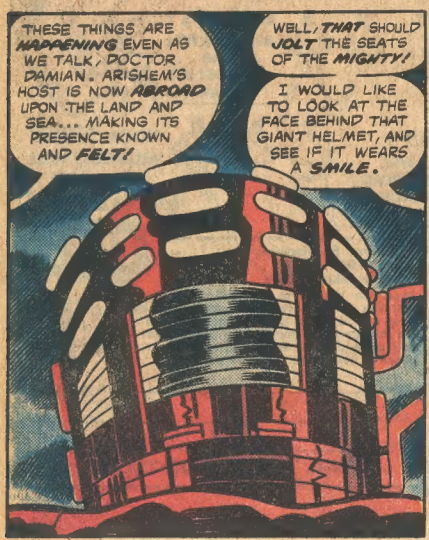
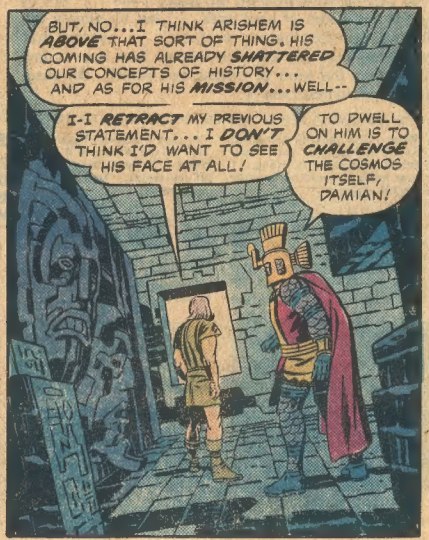
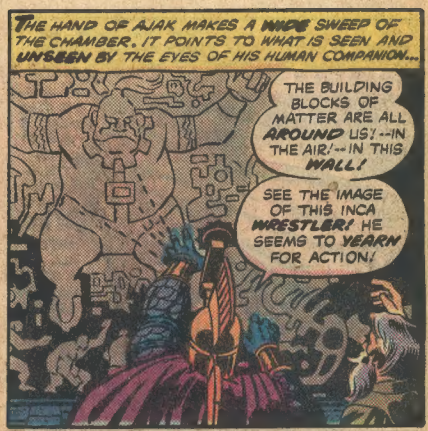
ON THE ANCIENT CEREMONIAL PYLONS, **ARISHEM**, LEADER OF THE FOURTH CELESTIAL HOST, STANDS, IMMOBILE AS THE MOUNTAINS OUTSIDE THE DOME. YET, ALL THAT MOVES UPON THE EARTH BECOMES MOTION WITHIN HIM... HIS BODY IS **ALIVE** WITH THE PRESSURES AND THE CRACKLINGS CAUSED BY THE MOVEMENT OF THE PLANET ITSELF...

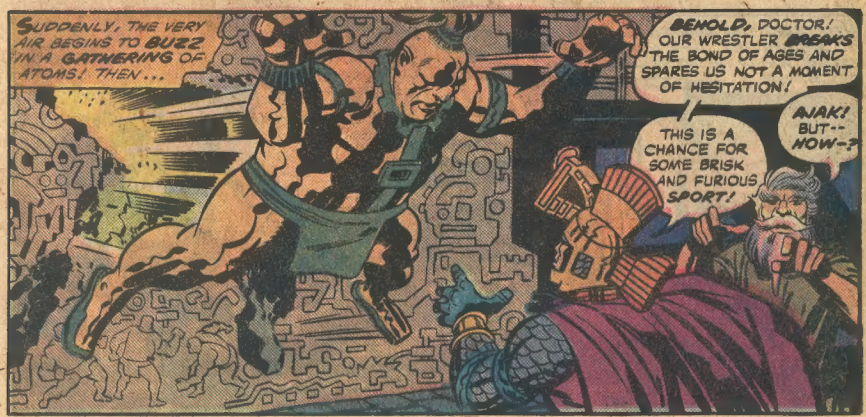
HE STANDS THERE, DAY AFTER PASSING DAY, WITHOUT TWITCHING A FINGER... YET, SOMEHOW -- I **KNOW** HE IS ACTIVE... DOING THINGS THAT WILL **CHANGE** OUR WORLD...

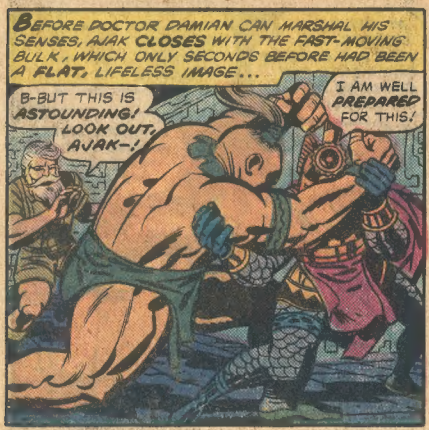




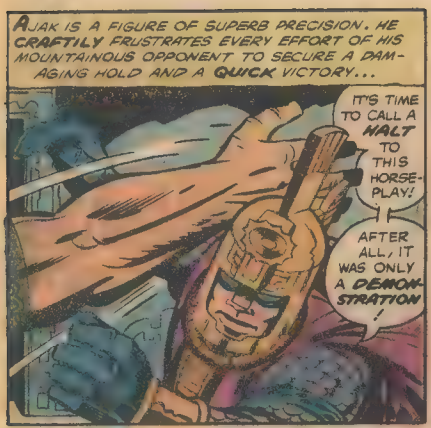
THERE ARE TOO FEW DIVERSIONS IN THIS PLACE TO THINK ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE!
NOT SO, DOCTOR! NO PLACE ON EARTH HOLDS MORE POTENTIAL FOR DIVERSITY THAN THIS ANCIENT RUIN!
THE YEARS THAT LIE AHEAD WILL BE LONG AND LONELY!

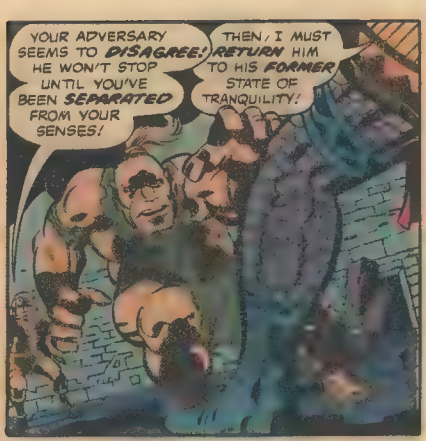

THE HAND OF AJAK MAKES A WIDE SWEEP OF THE CHAMBER. IT POINTS TO WHAT IS SEEN AND UNSEEN BY THE EYES OF HIS HUMAN COMPANION...
THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF MATTER ARE ALL AROUND US!--IN THE AIR!--IN THIS WALL!
SEE THE IMAGE OF THIS INCA WRESTLER! HE SEEMS TO YEARN FOR ACTION!

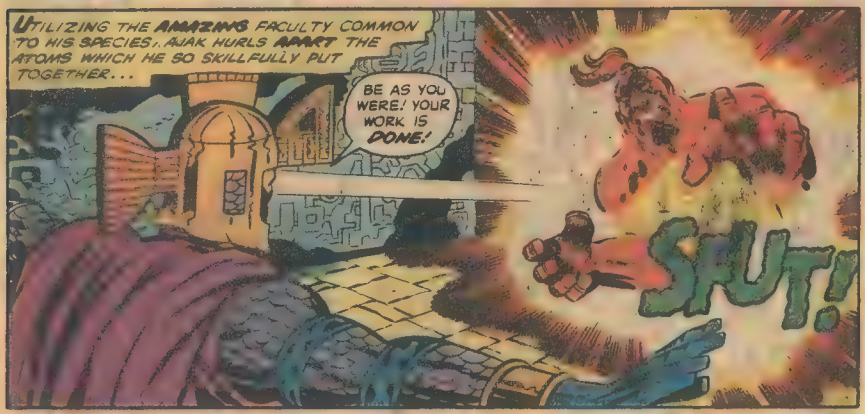

SUDDENLY, THE VERY AIR BEGINS TO BUZZ IN A GATHERING OF ATOMS! THEN...
BEHOLD, DOCTOR! OUR WRESTLER BREAKS THE BOND OF AGES AND SPARES US NOT A MOMENT OF HESITATION!
AJAK! BUT--HOW--?
THIS IS A CHANCE FOR SOME BRISK AND FURIOUS SPORT!

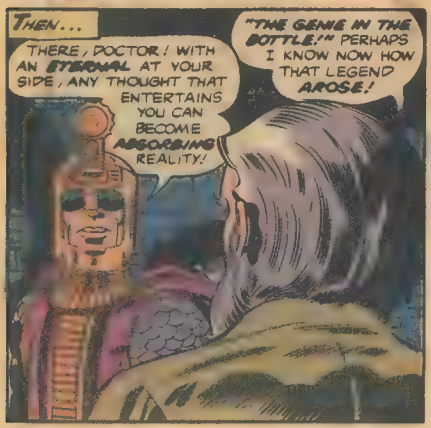

BEFORE DOCTOR DAMIAN CAN MARSHAL HIS SENSES, AJAK CLOSES WITH THE FAST-MOVING BULK, WHICH ONLY SECONDS BEFORE HAD BEEN A FLAT, LIFELESS IMAGE...
B-BUT THIS IS ASTOUNDING! LOOK OUT, AJAK--!
I AM WELL PREPARED FOR THIS!

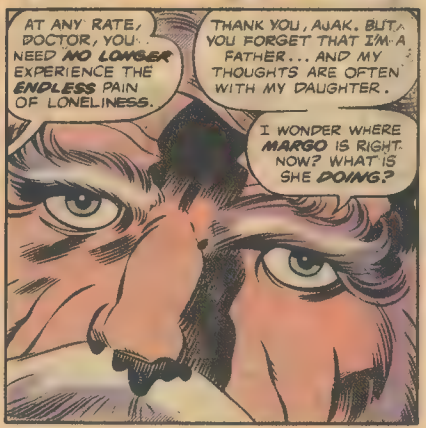
BY GUMPTION--! SO YOU ARE!! YOU HANDLE HIM JUST LIKE A PROFESSIONAL!
IT TAKES PRACTICE! AND I'VE HAD CENTURIES OF IT!!


AJAK IS A FIGURE OF SUPERB PRECISION. HE CRAFTILY FRUSTRATES EVERY EFFORT OF HIS MOUNTAINOUS OPPONENT TO SECURE A DAMAGING HOLD AND A QUICK VICTORY...
IT'S TIME TO CALL A HALT TO THIS HORSE-PLAY!
AFTER ALL, IT WAS ONLY A DEMON-STRATION!


YOUR ADVERSARY SEEMS TO DISAGREE! HE WON'T STOP UNTIL YOU'VE BEEN SEPARATED FROM YOUR SENSES!
THEN, I MUST RETURN HIM TO HIS FORMER STATE OF TRANQUILITY!


UTILIZING THE AMAZING FACULTY COMMON TO HIS SPECIES, AJAK HURLS APART THE ATOMS WHICH HE SO SKILLFULLY PUT TOGETHER...
BE AS YOU WERE! YOUR WORK IS DONE!
SPUT!


THEN...
THERE, DOCTOR! WITH AN ETERNAL AT YOUR SIDE, ANY THOUGHT THAT ENTERTAINS YOU CAN BECOME ABSORBING REALITY!
"THE GENIE IN THE BOTTLE!" PERHAPS I KNOW NOW HOW THAT LEGEND AROSE!


AT ANY RATE, DOCTOR, YOU NEED NO LONGER EXPERIENCE THE ENDLESS PAIN OF LONELINESS.
THANK YOU, AJAK. BUT YOU FORGET THAT I'M A FATHER... AND MY THOUGHTS ARE OFTEN WITH MY DAUGHTER.
I WONDER WHERE MARGO IS RIGHT NOW? WHAT IS SHE DOING?

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CALLED FROM EVERY CORNER OF THE EARTH BY GREAT **ZURAS**, ELDEST OF THE ETERNALS, THIS SPECIES OF MAN NOW FILLS THE SKY IN A RITUAL FLIGHT, MADE ONLY IN TIMES OF **WORLD STRESS!**

AS AN ANTHROPOLOGIST, YOU WILL FIND THE **FORMING** OF THE UNI-MIND A **RARE** TREAT, HOLDEN!

Y-Y-YES! Y-Y-YES! **TERRIBLY** EXCITING I-IKARIS!

HAHAHAHAH! YOU SEEM READY TO PASS OUT FROM THE SHEER **THRILL** OF IT, SAMUEL!

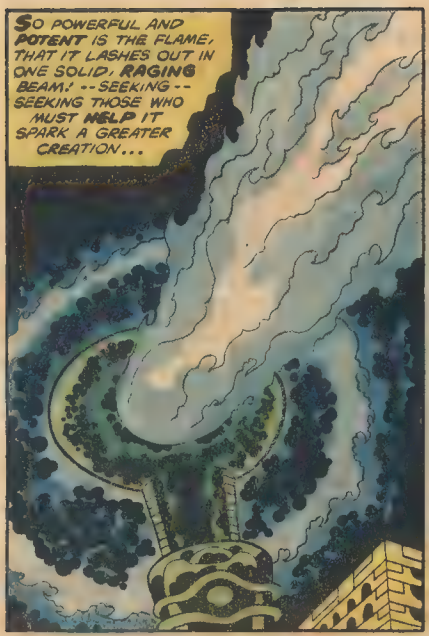
BUT, HANG ON. THERE'S MUCH **MORE** TO COME!

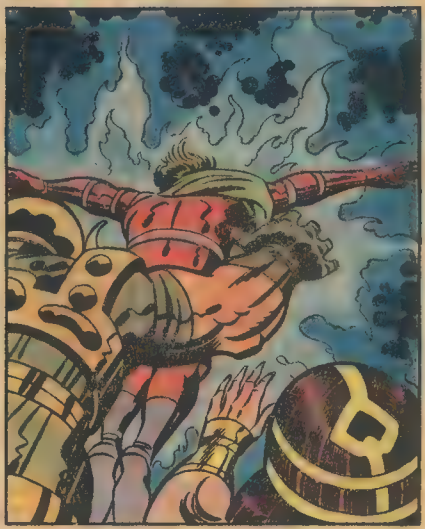
THE PRELIMINARY STEP TO UNI-MIND CONTINUES IN THE **GRACEFUL** FLIGHT OF THE MYRIAD ETERNALS, UNTIL...

ALL IS READY! THE MIND AND ESSENCE OF ZURAS REACHES OUT TO YOU! COME TO ZURAS! JOIN WHAT IS ZURAS!

SUDDENLY, A BRILLIANT BLUE FLAME BURSTS FROM ZURAS HIMSELF! IT IS NOT FIRE IN THE ORDINARY SENSE, BUT STEMS FROM THE MIND IN FULL DOMINANCE OVER THE BODY. IT IS ZURAS IN TOTALITY!!--AND BECOMES A SEETHING PRESENCE OF ITS OWN!!

COME!-- COME--AND **JOIN!!**





THE FLAME GLOWS BRIGHTER AND STRONGER AS EACH ETERNAL PASSES AND VANISHES INTO ITS HUNGRY CORE...

LET ALL THAT IS ZURAS BE OURS! LET ALL THAT IS OURS BECOME THE UNI-MIND!

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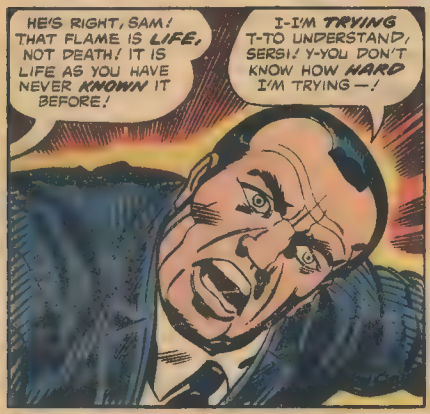
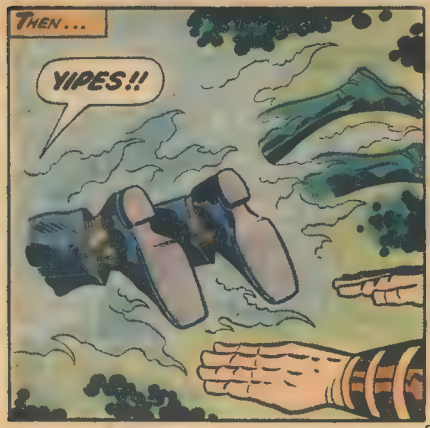
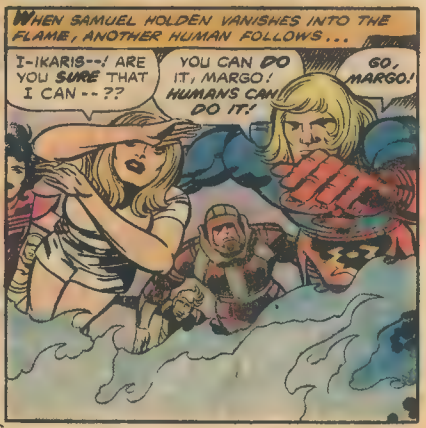
BUT, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY, THERE ARE HUMANS IN THIS ASTRAL PROCESSION . . . CONFUSED AND STARTLED HUMANS . . .
DON'T BALK, SAMUEL! YOU WON'T SINGE A BIT! I PROMISE YOU!
B-B-BUT, SERSI —! I-I'VE NEVER SEEN—!
NO HUMAN HAS EVER SEEN THIS! YET, YOU MUST DROWN YOUR FEARS AND ENTER THE FLAME!


HE'S RIGHT, SAM! THAT FLAME IS LIFE, NOT DEATH! IT IS LIFE AS YOU HAVE NEVER KNOWN IT BEFORE!
I-I'M TRYING T-TO UNDERSTAND, SERSI! Y-YOU DON'T KNOW HOW HARD I'M TRYING —!

W-W-WE'RE GOING INTO IT! T-T-THERE'S N-NO TURNING BACK! DON'T LEAVE ME, SERSI!!


THEN . . .
YIPES!!


WHEN SAMUEL HOLDEN VANISHES INTO THE FLAME, ANOTHER HUMAN FOLLOWS . . .
I-IKARIS--! ARE YOU SURE THAT I CAN--??
YOU CAN DO IT, MARGO! HUMANS CAN DO IT!
GO, MARGO!

COVERING HER EYES AT THE MOMENT OF ENTRY, MARGO DAMIAN BRAVELY GLIDES INTO THE FLAME...

HOLD MY HAND, IKARIS! HOLD IT TIGHTLY!.

MARGO PASSES THROUGH AND FEELS NO HEAT OR PAIN. THERE IS ONLY A BRIGHT BLINDING FLASH BEFORE SHE CEASES AS ONE, AND BECOMES--MANY!

ZSH!

SOON AFTER, THE VILLAGERS OF A REMOTE COMMUNITY BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS WITNESS THE APPEARANCE OF AN AMAZING PHENOMENON...

LOOK! THE MOUNTAINS GLOW, AS THEY DID IN ANCIENT DAYS!

IT IS AN OMEN!--AN EVIL OMEN!

HARD TIMES ARE UPON US! --DAYS OF CONFLICT AND WOE!

THE STRANGE GLOW INCREASES IN INTENSITY. IT PERMEATES THE NIGHT AND SPANS THE DISTANCES TO THE SEA. IT ADDS ANOTHER MYSTERY TO THE LOGS OF BAFFLED SHIPS...

W-WHAT CAN IT BE, CAPTAIN? I-I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT-!

DON'T GET ANY WILD IDEAS. IT MAY BE A SIDE AFFECT OF WEATHER CONDITIONS!

HIGH ABOVE THE CLOUDS, THE GLOW SEEMS LIKE A RISING BLUE DAWN. BUT, IT IS A DAWN WHICH COMES AT AN UNEXPECTED HOUR...

IT CAN'T BE THE SUN! I THINK ITS SOME FORM OF RADIOACTIVITY!

REPORT IT TO HOME BASE. THEY MAY BE INTERESTED!

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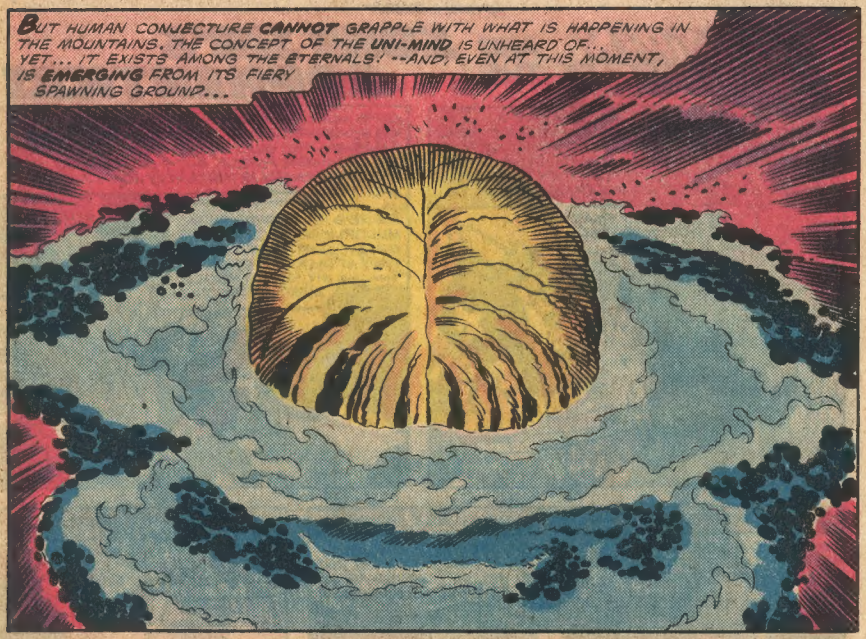
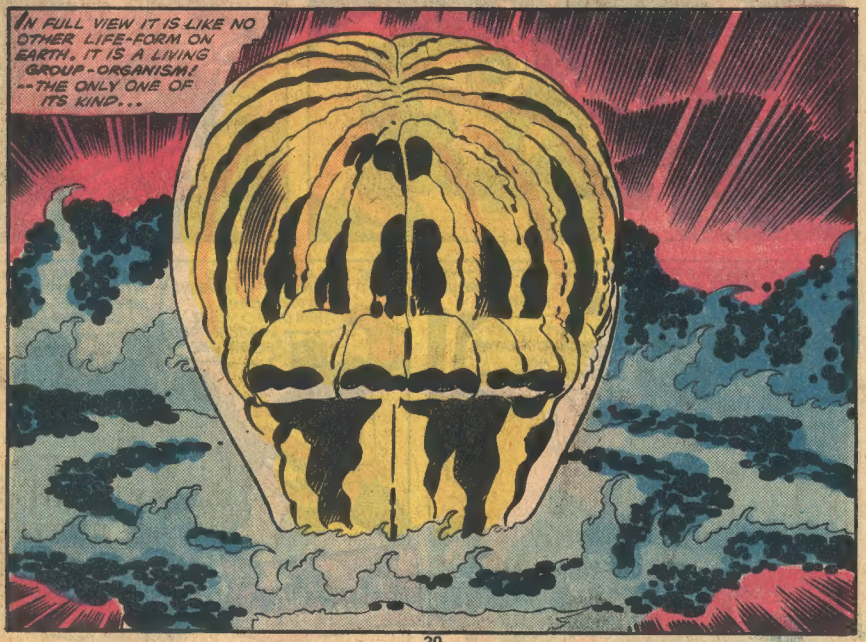
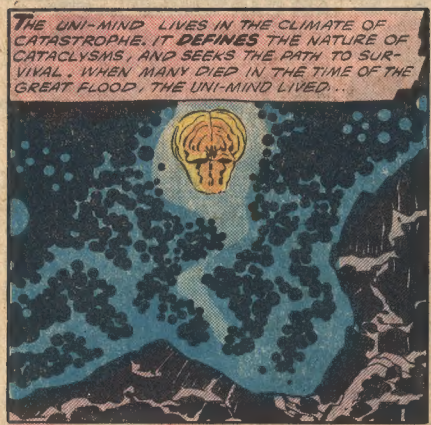
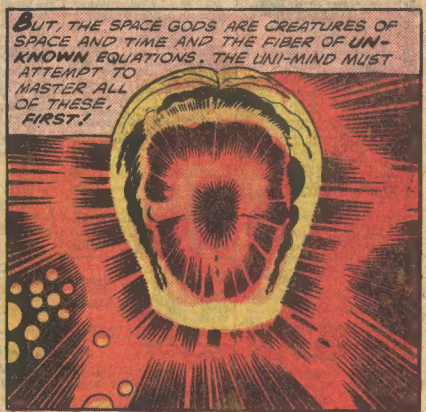

BUT HUMAN CONJECTURE CANNOT GRAPPLE WITH WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE MOUNTAINS. THE CONCEPT OF THE UNI-MIND IS UNHEARD OF... YET... IT EXISTS AMONG THE ETERNALS! --AND, EVEN AT THIS MOMENT, IS EMERGING FROM ITS FIERY SPAWNING GROUND...

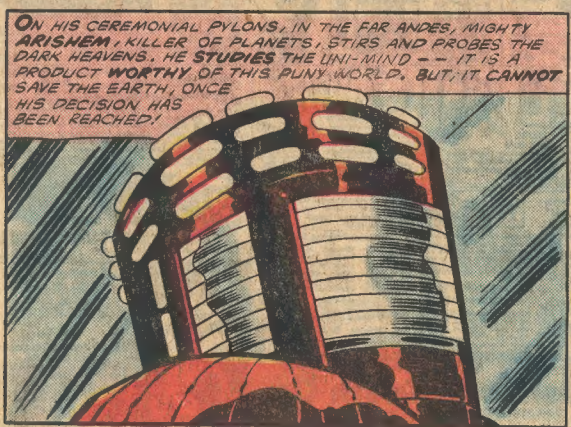

IN FULL VIEW IT IS LIKE NO OTHER LIFE-FORM ON EARTH. IT IS A LIVING GROUP-ORGANISM! --THE ONLY ONE OF ITS KIND...


THE UNI-MIND LIVES IN THE CLIMATE OF CATASTROPHE. IT DEFINES THE NATURE OF CATACLYSMS, AND SEEKS THE PATH TO SURVIVAL. WHEN MANY DIED IN THE TIME OF THE GREAT FLOOD, THE UNI-MIND LIVED...

NOW, IT BREAKS THE BONDS OF EARTH AND RISES TO ORBIT...

HERE, BEYOND THE PRESSURES OF GRAVITATION AND MAGNETIC FLOW, IT CAN DEAL WITH THE RETURN OF THE CELESTIALS FROM SPACE...


BUT, THE SPACE GODS ARE CREATURES OF SPACE AND TIME AND THE FIBER OF UNKNOWN EQUATIONS. THE UNI-MIND MUST ATTEMPT TO MASTER ALL OF THESE, FIRST!


ON HIS CEREMONIAL PYLONS, IN THE FAR ANDES, MIGHTY ARISHEM, KILLER OF PLANETS, STIRS AND PROBES THE DARK HEAVENS. HE STUDIES THE UNI-MIND -- IT IS A PRODUCT WORTHY OF THIS PUNY WORLD. BUT, IT CANNOT SAVE THE EARTH, ONCE HIS DECISION HAS BEEN REACHED!

IF YOU THINK THAT THIS IS HEAVY STUFF--WATCH FOR THE HEAVIEST! --WITH ACTION, YET! KEEP TABS ON THE UNI-MIND, ARISHEM, AND THE...
ASTRO NUTS
NEXT ISSUE!!!

ETERNAL UTTERINGS

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 575 MADISON AVE. N.Y.C. 10022

Dear Jack:

ETERNALS #8 was great. This is definitely Jack's best title, which means it's *the* best, period. I don't suppose you guys would consider putting it out biweekly, would you?

By the way, I disagree with Vallard Eding, who wants Jack to have a co-writer. No — a million times *no!* Anyone else writing ETERNALS would ruin it, because no one else can write Jack's comics better than Jack can. I believe he gets enough input and feedback just from reading our letters.

Anyway, keep up the spectacular work, Jack!

Mike Underwood
6241 18th Avenue North
St. Petersburg, FL 33710

Dear Marvel,

About your new mag,ETERNALS — magnificent! It's different from every other book that I read. It's not just a series, it's one gigantic epic!

I believe ETERNALS should take place out of the Marvel Universe. In writing ETERNALS, Jack must be careful not to mess up established characters, and in being too careful, he could make mistakes.

Of all your characters, I like Makarri the best. He's one character too good to ruin. Ikaris was my favorite through issue #3, but Jack doesn't even put him in the book anymore! I believe Ikaris should be on more covers!

Ajak has a good attitude ... and the most colorful costume!

One last question: Rumor has it that Jack is leaving CAPTAIN AMERICA, and that ETERNALS is being canceled. Is this true?

Donald Graham
1215 2nd Avenue North
Bessemer, AL 35020

Not if we can help it, Don! Our enthusiasm for ETERNALS is virtually unbounded, and we're looking forward to a long and successful run for this series. And Jack has no plans of leaving CAPTAIN AMERICA, either; at least, not for the foreseeable future. Finally, as you know by now, ETERNALS definitely takes place in the Marvel Universe, what with the recent appearances of various S.H.I.E.L.D. agents and an up-coming guest-shot by a certain green-skinned individual.

Dear Jack:

In THE ETERNALS #8, I got a satisfying glimpse of the still-potent Kirby magic. Just when I thought I had this series figured out, you took the initiative and surprised me on two fronts — the introduction of a handsome Reject, and the intimacy between Thena and Kro. Up to now the characters have been little more than talking symbols, but suddenly emotions are starting to flow in and around and between the mythological stereotypes.

Jack, you understand in the same way the Greek storytellers did, that the good guys are not always all good, and the bad guys are often nobler than the heroes. Thank you!

Steve Beery
1614 Union Street
San Francisco, CA 94123

Dear Mr. Armadillo:

I don't know exactly how to start a letter like this. It's not a letter of complaint, exactly. Nor is it a letter of praise.

I'm not foolish enough to think that this letter is going to pry off the lid that you so deftly placed on the question of whether or not Kirby's Eternals are on Marvel-Earth. I think, however, that somebody's made a mistake.

To wit: The very concept of this series runs counter to the basic structure of the alternate reality which is the Marvel Universe. Kirby has theorized a reality in which contact between Man, Eternal, and Deviant has resulted in the formation of myth and legend. In this reality, Lemuria was submerged by the Third Host of the Space Gods. In this reality, the gods were Eternals, and the devil myth was propagated by the Deviants. Believe me, Kirby is executing the concept incredibly well — much better (I confess) than I had thought him capable of doing.

But this is *not* the world that Marvel has created. The reality of Marvel Comics is a reality in which gods are gods, and in which the gods walk among men. It is a reality in which men *become* gods.

I find it difficult to believe that the Eternal called Zuras is the Zeus of Roman Mythology, when I can see the real red-beard popping up in every few issues of another magazine.

Separately, Kirby's first eight issues are very good. But graft them onto the Marvel mythos? No. To do so detracts from both. There's no way the concepts of this series can be made consistent with what has gone before.

Dennis Mallonee
4085 Nobel Drive
San Diego, CA 92122

Oh, so?

Dear Marvel,

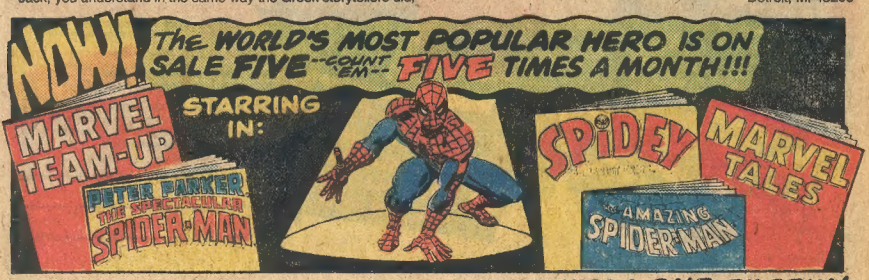
I'm proud to say that I own a complete collection of ETERNALS (as small as that may be) — and I'm doubly proud after reading #8. The reason is this: Up until now, I'd regarded ETERNALS as a "fun" comic, an imaginary story straight from the pages of Brand Ecch, a little ripple in Marvel's continuity, something not to be taken seriously. But after "The City of Toads," the comic becomes art.

This is one of the few Kirby stories that has come close to being an artistic whole. Every element of the story — the parley between Kro and Thena, Sersi's pranks at the expense of Doctor Holden — beautifully and skillfully wound around the moral fable of the Rejects. We are forced to compare the Deviant's society to our own — the Rejects resemble criminals, who we look away sanctimoniously, because they remind us of the faulty "seed" within us ... Wow!

There was only one flaw — the handsome Reject totally rocked the concept. Thena's closing comment — "You'll destroy the one object of value in this ugly domain!" — was not only out of character, but harked back to Kirby's other works, where the handsomest hero is the best hero. But that's the only flaw in what has to be considered the King's finest scripting effort to date.

So, until ... until ... aw, heck, make mine Marvel anyway.

James Jokerst
11455 Kennebec
Detroit, MI 48205



scanned by *Wizard*